

REMARKS

The Office has rejected claims 14, 22, 24 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the combination of Ashai Dow (JP 56-161160A) and Breulmann (WO 2001/083574) counterpart to US 2003/0105225). Applicants submit that claims 14, 22, 24 and 27 would not have been rendered unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the combination of Ashai Dow and Breulmann because the combination of these references do not teach or suggest all the recitations of the claimed molding. Specifically, the cited references do not teach or suggest the recited backing layer and an outer layer obtainable via polymerization of vinylaromatic monomers and acrylonitrile for the claimed molding.

The disclosure relates to a molding containing a composite layered sheet or film and a backing layer where the composite layer sheet or film contains a substrate layer, an optional intermediate layer and an outer layer comprising one or more hard copolymers obtainable via polymerization of vinylaromatic monomers and acrylonitrile. The structure of the molding is illustrated as follows:

outerlayer containing copolymer of vinylaromatic
and acrylonitrile monomers

Optional intermediate layer

Substrate layer containing components A and B and
optionally C and/or D

Backing layer

Disclosed structure for the molding

As the Office notes on page 2 of the Office Action, Ashai Dow describes a high impact polystyrene (HIPS) outerlayer, a styrene-butadiene copolymer intermediate layer and an acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene (ABS) outer layer. The Ashai Dow structure is as follows:

HIPS polymer

Styrene-Butadiene Copolymer

ABS Polymer

Structure described in Ashai Dow

Ashai Dow describes a HIPS polymer that is prepared by polymerizing a vinyl-substituted aromatic compound in the presence of synthetic rubber (Abstract). The Office suggests that the HIPS polymer is equivalent to the recited outer layer of the disclosure.

The Office has suggested modifying Ashai Dow by replacing the ABS layer of Ashai Dow with a polymer described in Breulmann. The Office appears to conclude the resulting HIPS polymer/styrene-butadiene copolymer/Breulmann copolymer structure is the same as the claimed molding structure.

However, this resulting structure is still missing the recited backing layer. Accordingly, the claimed molding has a structure with a specific combination of a backing layer, substrate layer and outerlayer that is distinct from the combination of Ashai Dow and Breulmann.

In addition, the recited outer layer contains a copolymer of vinylaromatic and acrylonitrile monomers not a HIPS copolymer as described in Ashai Dow. Applicants also note that the outerlayer contains from 80-100% by weight of α -methylstyrene and this composition for an outerlayer is not taught or suggested by the cited references. Accordingly, the proposed combination of Ashai Dow and Breulmann does not teach or suggest all the recitations of claimed molding; and therefore, the claimed molding would not have been obvious over the combination of Ashai Dow and Breulmann. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw the rejection of claims 14, 22, 24 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ashai Dow and Breulmann.

Finally, Applicants request that, should the Office allow claims 14, 22, 24 and 27, that the Office expand its search to the non-elected species in claims 12, 13, 15-17, 19-21, 23 and 25-30 and rejoin process claims 18 and 31.

In view of the above remarks, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 03-2775, under Order No. 12810-00006-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,
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